Washington, Jefferson, and "Citizen" Genet, 1793.

An article in Harper's Magazine for March, 1897, headed "Washington and the French Craze of 1793,"and other recent articles in other magazines and histories, seem to have for their chief object to collate and revive the calumnies, and to recolor the "Scarlet Letter" that American historical writers have generally sought to attach to the name of the Envoy of the First French Republic to this country, known as "Citizen" Genet. Since he never returned to his country, married in succession the daughters of two distinguished patriots of the American Revolution, George Clinton, for twenty-two years elected and re-elected Governor of the State of New York and later Vice-President of the United States, and of Samuel Osgood, First Commissioner of the U. S. Treasury during the Revolution, and U. S. Postmaster General by appointment of President Washington himself, 1789-91, became an honored citizen of the State of New York, and has left descendants—it is proper that an opportunity should be given to truth to assert itself—"If nothing were to remain—" says madame Roland in her appeal to posterity from the steps of the scaffold "but their calumnies and their conduct, the atrocity of their falsehood would still appear."

He was born at Versailles in 1763, and his name was Edmond Charles Genet de Charmantot. His father was Edmé Jacques Genet, a man of letters, a diplomat, a Count, and head of an important

bureau in the French Office of Foreign Affairs during the American Revolution. It was of great importance to establish and maintain in Europe the isolation of great Britain and a general sympathy with the Colonies. In this view, in addition to his other duties, he was intrusted by de Vergennes to compile and circulate through the Courts of Europe, a semi-official periodical called Affaires de L'Anglettere et de l'Amerique. It was begun in 1776 and suspended at the end of 1778 after the treaties between France and the United States, and at the making of which he assisted, were made public. This work is in fifteen volumes and is in several of the libraries of the U. S. The American Commissioners Franklin, Adams and Izard made contributions to it from time to time. It was in translating some of these into French that young Genet acquired his love of liberty.

He was the youngest child and only son. The eldest was Henriette, who upon the arrival of the young Archduchess, Marie Antoinette, to wed the Dauphin, Louis XVI, was placed by the Duke de Choiseul with that Princess, as reader. She always remained with her and when that Princess became Queen, was married to M. Campan, and appointed Lady of the Bedchamber. Two younger sisters were afterwards placed near the Queen, who endowed and married them, and became godmother for some of their children.

Edmond was educated under the personal supervision of his father, in all such knowledge and accomplishments as might be useful to him in the Diplomatic career to which he was destined. This included the ancient and modern languages. When quite young he translated into French and published the life of Eric, King of Sweden, which brought him a gold medal from the then King, and gave him a place among the literary men of the day. As such he was presented to Vol-

taire by the Chevalier d'Eon. "Ah," said Voltaire to him aside, "I should have done much better to have made her, referring to d'Eon, the heroine of my Pucelle instead of Joan, who after all was but a rude country girl."

He went to Brest with M. Gerard and other young men from his father's office to learn the terms used by the English and American sailors and officers at that port, to compile a dictionery of English and French naval terms for the use of the French sailors during the American War. At seventeen he received a commission as Lieutenant in the Army, was attached to the Regiment of Dragoons, commanded by the Duke de Luynes, and accompanied that regiment to Brest, to be transported to this country, to aid in the Revolution; but information being received that cavalry was not wanted here, the regiment returned. He next went to Giesen to study international law and to improve himself in German, then to Berlin and was attached to the Embassy at that Court. He took with him letters of personal recommendation, which procured for him a flattering reception from Frederick the Great, who conversed with him for a half hour upon French literature. From Berlin he went to Vienna and was attached for a time to the French Embassy at that Court. In the fall of 1781 he returned to Versailles with the Minister, the Baron de Breteuil, only in time to attend the deathbed of his father.

His education in the languages, history, diplomacy and law, as well as the personal accomplishments, had been so thorough that on, the recommendation of the Count de Vergennes, and through the influence of the Queen, he was appointed to his father's place. It was to this office he says that the news of the battle of Yorktown came first; brought over from England in some fishing smacks, and with it the less agreeable intelligence of the

defeat of the Count de Grasse. He at once took it to the King, who made him read it twice and then directed him to take it to the Duke de Castries, Minister of War, who directed him to withhold the news, until measures could be taken to counteract the effect of the defeat of DeGrass. This was the same minister, he adds, who directed me to send the plan of the battle to London, *before it was fought*, to defeat some financial scheme of the British.

In 1783 he went to London as Secretary of the Special Embassy that was sent there to make a Commercial Treaty after the American Treaties had been signed at Paris. It was here that he first exhibited that tendency to Democracy that afterwards brought him to the verge of the scaffold, as also to the detestation and sneers of most American historical partisians. Instead of being presented at Court he went at the earnest request of his friend, the Duke de la Rochefoucold, to Manchester and other manufacturing towns in England to get material for papers upon manufactures to be read before one of the Academies, of which they were members. He sought out Mr. Watt, the inventor of steam engines, from whom he obtained a promise to come to France, to learn them its use. On his return he obtained for a son of Mr. Watt a place as one of the King's Pages. He brought with him also the screw auger, of which the French knew nothing, and a new kind of harpoon, thereby, he says, believing that he did his country a real service, while the treaty that had been signed could only bring it disaster. His undisguised hostility to that unfortunate treaty, first brought him the violent enemies and the warm friends who, as they increased from different causes, embittered and sweetened his after life. That ended, hate being the most lasting consigns his name to be crucified on the pages of American History.

About this time the Count de Vergennes, the firm and steadfast friend of 'the extension of French Commerce and of American Independence in aid of it, died; and France entered on that downward course of financial disorder and general incompetence, that ended in the terrible epoch known as the French Revolution; of which the Reign of Terror of Robespierre and the advent of Napoleon the Avenger, are the most marked features.

When the States General were assembled, in consequence of the disorder in the finances, originally caused by the great strain of the war of the American Revolution, it was divided into committees, each of which was presided over by a Prince of the blood. LaFayette was a member of the committee presided over by the King's youngest brother, the Count d'Artois. It was proposed to adopt the stamp duties as a means of raising more revenue. The Count sent for Genet and said to him, that he knew that his father had kept in his office a full history of the stamp duties in England, and he wished him to examine the matter and to report as soon as possible. He sat up all night and drew a paper showing the bad effects of those acts upon trade and commerce. He came before the Committee the next day and began to read his paper, when the Count stopped him, saying, if they wished to hear further on the subject he would send for him. LaFayette, meeting him at the house of the Duke de la Rochefoucold the next day, embraced him and said to him, "you are very young, but yesterday you behaved like a man." The great expense of the American War had disarranged French finances. The Nobility and Clergy had in time past, acquired great holdings of land, and in various ways, exempted themselves from taxation, putting the whole burden on trade and commerce. The liberal party, composed

of men of the highest attainments, as well as some of the privileged classes, sought to force the privileged classes to give up some of these exemptions for the welfare of the State; but the classes refused it, even to the point of general ruin. From this starting point arose the great French Revolution. LaFayette belonged to the liberal party.

Genet soon felt the effect of the displeasure of the Prince. Among the economic reforms adopted was the abolition of his office, and a transfer of its duties to other departments of the office of Foreign Affairs. Being then out of employment he applied to be sent to St. Petersburg, as Chargé d'Affaires, Count de Segur, the French Minister at that Court, having asked leave of absence. The Queen interested herself in the matter and the appointment was made. On his arrival the Count had changed his mind, having failed to effect peace between Russia and the Turks. De Segur however invited himto remain and act as Secretary of Legation until he should return.

September 11th, 1787, Count De Segur wrote to Count de Montmorin, Minister of Foreign Affairs. "M. Genet has arrived and delivered me the letter you do me the honor to write me. I have presented him to the Vice Chancellor, and he will be presented next Sunday to the Empress. His form, his bearing and conversation, correspond perfectly with the eulogies that have been made of him in all the letters he has brought me." "I went with the Count to Court," Genet says, " where I was introduced to the whole Diplomatic Corps, previous to the return of Her Imperial Majesty from the Chapel. Upon the signal of her arrival being given by the officers who preceded her, the Ambassadors, Ministers, Secretaries and Foreigners of distinction present, ranged themselves on both sides of the door of the grand Salle D'Audience. She stopped there with her cortegé, and every one of

those I have mentioned approached her in turn with a profound bow, and taking her hand respectfully, was permitted to kiss it. She was engaged in conversation with Counts Cobenzl and De Segur when Count Osterman mentioned my name and character to her. She stretched out her hand as usual, but looking at me attentively she indicated a surprise which was noticed by all those who were present. Afterwards I was informed it arose from the following circumstance. It had pleased Divine Providence to establish a perfect resemblance between her late favorite, Count Landskoy, and myself; in addition to which I wore the brilliant uniform of the First Regiment of Dragoons, called the Colonel General, which was very similar to that Landskoy used to wear. Madame La Baronne de Benkersdorf, Lady of Honor to the Grand Duchess, told me that the resemblance had also been noticed by the Grand Duchess and the Grand Duke, and had been the subject of conversation after the audience.

After about a year, affairs in France becoming deeply disturbed and there being no immediate prospect of his being able to bring about a peace between Russia and the Turks De Segur determined to return home. In a private letter to Count de Montmorin, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, he says, "M. Genet has shown me a letter of thanks "he has written you. Each time that he believes "that he owes you thanks I should do the same. "He is a very distinguished young man, and I "dare say very important to keep in the King's ser- "vice. To advance him will be a useful service to "his Majesty. He is in all respects suitable. He "unites agreeable talents with profound knowledge. "He is erudite without pedantry, bright without "pretension; his logic is just, his zeal indefatigable, "his wit is ornate, his manner of thinking noble "and attractive. I dare to assure you, Count, that

"a Minister at the head of your department will "find few persons whom he can attach to himself "or employ actively with more profit and less "inconvenience."

January 31, 1789, he writes: "I have another "prayer to make to you, Count It is to encourage "the zeal of M. Genet by a little bounty and some "hope of advancement. He has served at Vienna "with the Baron deBreteuil, at London with M. "de Moustier; he has been Chief of a Bureau; I "have given him since he has been here, excessive "work, and the more I become acquainted with "him, the more I find him to be a great treasure to "sustain and employ." Both requests were granted. He was promoted to the rank of Captain and was left as Chargé d'Affaires, acting in concert at St. Petersburg with Count deChoisuel, the French Minister at Constantinople, to bring about peace with as little loss of territory to the Turks as possible. At the end of about a year it was accomplished, and Genet stood in high favor at the Russian Court. The Empress presented him with diamond knee buckles, and in other ways showed her satisfaction.

In the meantime the King of France had accepted and sworn to support a Constitution, and had required all of his agents at Foreign Courts to do the same; but he had no sooner done this than he was persuaded to change his mind. The Princes, his brothers, left France and became known by the term Emigréés. They invited the sovereigns of Europe to form an allied army to invade France and restore the King to his former absolute power.

In a book published in Paris in 1895, entitled "Catharine the Great," by M. de la Riviére, preface by Alfred Rambaud, the author says: ""In 1791, we find France with three repre- "sentatives. France of the Constitution in the

"person of M. Genet; the Royal Court in the per-
"son of the Marquis deBombelles; the Emigréés in
"the person of Count Esterhazy. In her treatment
"of these three representatives Catharine varied.
"Genet was kept at a distance from the Court,
"surrounded with spies, loaded with disagreeable
"proceedings and finally expelled. Bombelles
"was received very coldly as the emissary of a
"King 'captive' and besides 'who did not know
"himself what he wanted.' All the favors went to
"Count d'Artois, to the Emigréés, and yet the
"only one of these to whom Catherine rendered
"any real service, was that of the Revolution; not
"even to that Genet represented; and which still
"had a Royal Constitution; but the one she held
"in utter horror, France of the Convention. To
"the Constitutional Royalists she granted her
"*disdain.* To the ultra Royalists some courteous
"words and some money. To the King and Queen
"a little pity; but to the 'Athiests' the 'Jacobins'
"the 'Regicides,' as she called them, she contrib-
"uted most signally to give them the Low Coun-
"tries, Holland, the left bank of the Rhine. She
"did not save either the head of Louis XVI, nor
"the crown of Louis XVII, nor the pretensions
"of Louis XVIII, but next to the energy of the
"Convention, the safety of the Republic is attrib-
"utable to the policy of Catherine II." What the author means is—that when the allied armies were about to invade France, discovering the design of the Empress to seize Poland, the Emperor of Austria and King of Prussia withdrew a portion of their troops to frustrate her design and secure their own share of plundered Poland; and thus caused the French successes.

"Count Esterhazy," continues this author "ar-
"rived at St. Petersburgh a '*persona grata*' at the
"moment when Genet represented the French Gov-
"ernment officially. But M. Genet, a brother of

"Madame Campan, was, according to M. de St. "Priest, who had the full confidence of the Empress " 'un petit sot enragé,' an insane young fool; and, "according to Catharine, an insane demagogue, 'un "demagogue enragé.' August 31st, 1791, Count "Osterman notified him no longer to appear at "Court, and Count Besberodko treated him as a "person under police surveillance. For the rest his "position became intolerable, and after the events "of June, 1792, in France, he had to quit Russia "July 27th." Catharine had her real intentions safely locked in her own bosom. The King of Prussia was not disposed to join the league and refused to do so, until as appears in the letters of Mr. Paget, the then Secretary of Legation to the British Embassy at St. Peterburg, recently published, the English Government gave him two million pounds sterling to do so. Now what had England to gain that it should advance so large a sum to induce Prussia to enter the League? It could have but one object, the isolation and humiliation of France, the expurgation of all republics, and with the aid of her American friends, *direct* her *colonies to return to their former allegiance.* The Republic of the United States would have fallen as Poland fell "unwept without a crime." In this condition, this country being in an acknowledged defenceless state, Washington determined to repudiate the French Treaties and "to offer Great Britain as an inducement, the Commercial treaty that they wanted in 1778. See Sparks Washington XI, p. 505, Life of Paine by Conway, vol. 2, p. 176.

If American writers think Genet left Russia really *personally despised* by the Empress, they are mistaken. During the time he was forced to leave the society of the Court and live in retirement, she at one time took pity on his loneliness and directed some of the ladies of her Court to of-

fer him a fête at one of her castles outside the city. And again, when about to return to France under her order of expulsion it was intimated to him, that he could enter the diplomatic service of Russia if he would give up his own country, which offer he refused. His coadjutor in the peace between Russia and the Turks, Count de Choiseul, did enter the service of Russia, married a Russian lady and gave up his own country. "Catharine gave "him lands, peasants and lucrative places. She "only accepted those who consented to quit France "without hope to return, and who by their age and "capacity, assured her a long period of service," says M. de la Riviere.

During the whole of this period she kept La Harpe, a Swiss, who was fully imbued with the philosophical ideas of the time, as the preceptor of her grandchildren, Alexander and Constantine, despite the earnest efforts of Esterhazy and the Prince of Nassau to remove him. "The Grand Duke Constantine," wrote Genet to M. de Montmorin, minister of Foreign affairs, in 1791, "is an ardent Democrat", M. de la Riviere relates the following: "One day at Court, some of "the Emigrés as usual spread themselves in praise "of the ancient régime. The young Duke con-"stantine, then but fourteen, lost patience; and "answered, that what they were saying of the state "of affairs in France before the Revolution was ab "solutely false." It was at this time that the Empress said of these sentiments, "they may all be true but my business is to be an aristocrat."

In a memorandum for his memoirs by Genet, he says of points to be mentioned "Conference with "de Milhau at Petersburg. Exhibition of a private "letter of Monsieur. My refusal to co-operate, and "my determination to support the Constitution, "Conference with Besborodko, confidential minis-"ter of Catherine II, in which I predicted all that has

"happened. Count Cobenzl, Austrian minister, the "same, Opening of de Sombreuil at Petershoff, He "admits that he had brought counter letters from "the King, presses me to retreat, and assures me "that I shall be well rewarded. I refuse. Arrival "of M. de St. Priest. He admits that he has secret "orders and powers, but wishes to act jointly with "me; My refusal and our rupture, He leaves me on "the road to the Vice Chancellor's; Intrigues to "have my accreditation suspended; He succeeds, I "protest, which was the first cause of my popularity "in France." His protest was that a nation had a right to regulate its own internal affairs.

The moment he broke with M. de St. Priest, Genet wrote a letter to his sister, Mde. Campan, informing her of the resolution he had taken, saying that she must throw herself at the feet of the Queen and inform her of it, and to say to her, that he could see more clearly from Petersburg, what was going on in Paris, than could be seen there, where the fogs from the Seine frequently obscured a view of the river, even from the Pavilion of Flora in the garden of the Tuilleries; and that he saw the safety of the Throne only in a strict adherence to the Constitution. But that his sisters had nothing to do with these questions, which were purely political; their duty lay in faithful service to the Queen. The Queen said that some ladies of the Court had already been to warn her against retaining the sisters of the Republican Genet so near to her; but she said she had known them too long to doubt them. Genet is an honest man, she said, but she feared it would interfere with his future advancement. She kept the letter to show to the King.

The then minister of Foreign Affairs, Le Brun, August 17th, 1792, writes Genet: "Your mission being finished at Petersburg, do not lose an instant; make your preparations to return to Paris as quickly as possible. Your known patriotism

and the distinguished talents that you have developed during your residence at Petersburg are titles too precious not to require me to present you with new means to serve your country usefully. Hasten to come to the Capitol, where I will see you with great pleasure, since I destine you for a new mission, in which I am very sure you will acquire new rights to the gratitude of your fellow citizens."

He arrived at Warsaw, where five years before he had spent a pleasant week at the Court of Poniatowski, then King by the appointment of Cathrine, under the title of Stanislaus Augustus. He was King no more. Poland was divided between Austria, Prussia and Russia, and was a waste of ruin. Hearing of the excesses of the mobs in Paris, he despatched a Courier with a letter to the Government, reminding it of his services, and asking for protection for his sisters who were in the service of the Queen. The letter arrived the fatal 10th of August, 1792. It was tied up with National ribbons and two officers sent to the Tuilleries to rescue the sisters of the patriot Genet, from the mob which was then attacking the palace. Mde. Campan relates in her memoir of the Queen, that two of the mob already had them in their hands, when these officers appeared, and rescued them, and escorted them to their houses. She never knew what caused it.

He had a flattering reception at Paris; was promoted to the rank of Colonel and appointed Minister to Holland, where he could not go at once because it was yet in the hands of the allies. The army of Gen. Montesquiou had been lying for several months at the foot of the Alps, the Swiss cantons refusing to let it pass over their territory which was neutral. He was sent on a special mission to Geneva; overcame their objections; obtained the requisite permission; received the written

thanks of the syndicate and Council and returned to Paris in fifteen days. It was, he says, his success in this mission that opened the road for Napoleon's subsequent Italian victories.

On his return to Paris, he became active in an effort to secure a sentence of banishment against the King instead of death. He attended the great ball given to Gen'l Dumouriez in honor of his victories, and finding it an orgie, left in disgust at an early hour with Gen'l Massena. He was present at a State Council, when the question was, whether or not war should be declared against England. Being asked what he thought of her military power said "It was formidable in proportion as it was feared." After the council, Count de Kersaint joined him and said to him that he was of the same opinion.

A majority of the Convention were finally pledged to vote for the banishment of the King rather than death. The next question was to what country he should be banished, and it was decided that it should be to the United States, where he was held with much gratitude. A special mission was determined on, so that the King and Royal family could be at once removed. For various reasons the mission was offered to Genet—he hesitated to accept. The American minister Morris said he would not be received and his mission would be a failure. Condorcet opposed it, saying it would be better to send him to Constantinople. Genet finally consented, partly in the hope of being able to show his personal respect to his late sovereigns, and partly because he was not a man who would be deterred by difficulties if he could serve his country. He was appointed Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Consul General with full power to represent the Republic of France in the Republic of the United States.

His instructions were extensive and difficult.

He took leave of his mother and sisters. The Frigate l'Embuscade was at Brest ready to sail. He went to the Convention to see the vote and there saw Vergniaux and a few of the leading Girondists suddenly surrender to what was called the Mountain; and vote for the King's death instead of banishment. There was nothing for him to do but to depart on his mission. He had not reached the gates of the city, before his carriage was stopped by a mob, who were already taking control or the Government. It insisted he had the Dauphin concealed in the boot. They examined it and also his trunks, when, being satisfied, with the aid of a magistrate and some officers of the National Guard, he was allowed to proceed. Arrived at Brest, the same story had reached the crew of the vessel, and they refused to sail. He addressed them for two hours, at the end of which time they resumed their duties with cheers for the Republic.

Contrary winds detained the vessel nearly a month. In the meantime there was sent to him from Paris, a large number of blank commissions called letters of marque with directions to distribute them among the French Consuls in the United States. A foreign minister has to obey the orders of his government, whatever they may be, without question. Finally the vessel sailed, and it was a proud day, he says, when her bow struck into the Atlantic waves, to carry him to the land of Franklin and Washington; the land where it was believed that liberty and honor had taken their abode. Again contrary winds kept the vessel at sea nearly six weeks; when, finding himself near Charleston, Genet determined to proceed by land to Philadelphia—not to excite the people, as is claimed; for he could have had no foreknowledge of the reception he received along his route; and not to insult the Government, as is insisted upon; for he had no

official knowledge then, that the Government really intended to annul its treaties with France. Nor did the people know it; for the Neutrality proclamation had not then been made. But the journey he hoped would enlighten him on several points. He would see at Charleston Ralph Izard, Commodore Gillon, and other friends of his father, who knew the service he had rendered them and all the Americans in Paris during the American Revolution. From them he could learn something of the disposition of the Government and of the people. When asked by the Girondists what effect the execution of the King would have in America, Paine had answered: "Bad, very bad." This had to be met. He could take the Governor of Virginia on his way, and perhaps find President Washington at Mount Vernon, and make an informal call upon him, as a private person, before being formally presented and acknowledged. Mr. Izard, Governor Moultrie and others accompanied him out of Charleston. Mr. Izard told him the policy of the government was fixed. It would not fulfil the French treaties. The receptions he met along the route were spontaneous and generous; in some respects gratifying, in others unfortunate and untimely. He found the Governor of Virginia at Richmond, but when he reached Mount Vernon, Washington had left hurriedly for Philadelphia, where he summoned his Secretaries for advice and submitted certain questions to them. "In answer to these it was determined "That Congress need "not be called together; that although the "country was under no treaty obligation to give "England, the least consideration it was policy to "be neutral. That as France had made the declara- "tion, she was engaged in offensive war, and could "claim no aid under the treaty which created a "purely defensive alliance. *That it would be* "*well to receive the French Envoy when he came.*"

Thus the net result was that they would receive the Envoy as a sop to the people who were evidently in opposition to the policy of the Government; that they would evade or wholly refuse to to fulfil the French treaties, in other respects following the lead of Catherine of Russia and the allies; would make the mission as disagreeable as possible, and if the Envoy showed a disposition not to submit they would find means to destroy him.

Unfortunately Genet was not the kind of patriot to betray his country in that way. Mde. Roland executed in the summer of the same year with her husband and the whole of the Girondists, by Robespierre, says of him:

"The choice of an envoy to the United States "was conducted with more wisdom, and affords a "new argument in favor of Brissot, against whom "the share he had in it, is brought forward as a "crime. Bonne Carrére having been fixed upon I "know not at what period, Brissot obsêrved to sev-"eral members of the Council, that it was of conse-"quence to the maintenance of our good under-"standing with the United States as well as to the "glory of our infant Republic, to send to America "a man whose disposition and manners might be "agreeable to the Americans. In that respect Bonne "Carrére was not a suitable person—an amiable "libertine of the fashionable world and a gamester, "whatever might be his talents and abilities was "very unfit to play the grave and decent part, be-"coming a minister resident with that transatlantic "nation."

"Brissot was actuated by no personal interest, "he was the last man in the world to be so influ-"enced; he mentioned Genet who was just returned "from a residence of five years in Russia, and be-"sides his being already conversant with diplo-"matic affairs, possessed all the moral virtues and

"all the information that could render him agree-"able to a serious people.

"That proposal was wise; it was supported by "every possible consideration and Genet was pre-"ferred. If this be an intrigue, let us pray that "all intriguers may resemble Brissot. I saw Genet, "I desired to see him again, and should always be "delighted with his company. His judgment is "sound and his mind enlightened. He has as much "amenity as decency of manners--his conversation "is instructive and agreeable and equally free from "pedantry and from affectation—gentleness, pro-"priety, grace and reason are his characteristics "and with all this merit he unites the advantage "of speaking English with fluency. Let the ig-"norant Robespierre and the extravagant Chabot "declaim against such a man, by calling him the "friend of Brissot—let them procure by their "clamors the recall of the one and the trial of the "other, they will only add to the proofs of their "own villainy and stupidity, without hurting the "fame of those whom they may find means to de-"prive of existence."

The policy adopted by the United States Government to receive the envoy and destroy him as soon as possible, if he should prove intractable, but in all other respects to repudiate the treaties, was a weak and foolish device to cover up a gross and wilful violation of the most sacred treaties that were ever made by any country, the very price of its birth and existence. By receiving the envoy it acknowledged the Republic of France, and as a necessary consequence acknowledged the treaties, and thus put itself in the position of first acknowledging them and then violating them without apparent cause. It would have been better to refuse to acknowledge the French Republic.

In the winter of 1778, Washington with a ragged and starving army at Valley Forge was all that was

left of the American Revolution. Commissioners were on their way from England to offer forgiveness, at the same time a fast vessel was sailing from France with the treaties of Amity and Alliance and Commerce. By these treaties France agreed to take up arms in behalf of the colonies and "never to "make peace until their independence had been "secured, and guaranteed their sovereignty and in- "dependence forever. In return the United States "pledged itself to defend the possessions of the "French Crown in America; in other words, the "French West Indies." When Genet asked for arms to defend their West India Islands Mr. Hamilton said it would be a cause of war with Great Britain if they did so. Gen'l Knox said "they "would not give him so much as a pistol, and this "was the determination of the Government, unless "he could turn President Washington inside out." It is unnecessary to cite breaches of the treaties or what rights the French had under them. It is sufficient that it has been determined by Congress after Congress by Webster, Clay, Seward and other statesmen, by the decision of the Court of Claims and by the Supreme Court of the United States that the United States Government did violate its treaties with France in 1793.

The writer in an article in Harpers April, 1896, undertakes to give an account of Genet's arriving in Philadelphia. "On May 16th, he says, a rider "galloped down Gray's Ferry Road; the boom of "three guns was heard in the city; hundreds of "people flocked to the State House, and marching "to Gray's Ferry on the Schuylkill, brought Genet "in triumph to town." This is dramatic but erroneous. Learning of what was going on, Genet took another road and reached the city before it was known; this, however, did not prevent the people from surrounding the hotel and making him an address, to which decency required that he should

respond, which he did in a way that has never been claimed to be objectionable.

The next day he was presented to President Washington, and made him an address that Mr. Jefferson said no one could have heard without being affected. The reply of Washington was cold to freezing. The next day, or a few days later, he was given a dinner at Oeller's Hotel, the toasts for which were prepared by Mr. Jefferson; but neither he nor any member of the Cabinet attended. It did not take Genet long to discover the tactics that were to be employed against him.

On the 24th of April, 1778, William Temple Franklin in Paris wrote to Silas Dean: "Things "continue in almost the same situation as when "you left, as neither France nor England have as "yet declared war. France I believe, wishes for "it; but England dreads it; though her ministers or "rather misleaders talk of it with great indiffer-"ence. They feel more and more the absolute ne-"cessity of a reconciliation with us, and are almost "willing to give up the word Independence. I say "the word, for as yet, they would *conciliate only* "*on condition that the commerce from the United* "*States should be limited to Great Britian togeth*-"*er with other stipulations absolutely inconsis*-"*tent with the spirit of true independence.*"

Washington was of English ancestry, his affections and prejudices were all English, prior to the Declaration of Independence. He had been in the war against the French in 1763, when Canada was gained by Great Britain. In 1775, on his way to Congress, "Being warned that the path on which he was entering might lead to separation from England," he said "If ever you hear of my joining "in any such measure you have my leave to set me "down for everything wicked." But aid would not be given by the King of France to a mere revolt; it was necessary that the American Congress

should declare its independence, establish a government, become a nation and make a treaty before the King could aid them openly in the revolt. Hence the Declaration of Independence and the United States of America.

Appointed to the Chief Command, the cause became his own, and Washington performed his duties faithfully and honorably, but he was surrounded by men who were more hostile to France than himself.

During the American Revolution Washington at first opposed French officers coming to America. But after the winter at Harper's Ferry he changed his views. At the final battle at Yorktown there were more French officers and soldiers than American. Washington had not been able to furnish the quota he had promised. When the British determined to give up the struggle and trust to the language and the old affection and the dependency of the people on their commerce to bring them back, they demanded that peace should be made separately from France, and this was accepted by the American commissioners. Dr. Franklin was at first unwilling thus to desert their faithful ally, but France, exhausted by the war, shut its eyes to this first violation of the compact.

After the peace, the States, exhausted by the war, and their seaports deprived of the profits of the trade with Great Britain, upon which they had always lived, became anxious for a return to more amicable relations with their ancient oppressor. The condition of France was becoming more desperate each year and the merchants more pressing. In 17~~8~~92 Washington wrote to Mr. Morris, the American minister at Paris, to sound the English Minister upon the subject of a commercial treaty. The British Government, of course, gave a favorable answer; but William Pitt had views very different from this; which were,

that the *Colonies should come back to them peaceably if they would, forcibly* if they must. It was in this view that he entered into the conspiracy to cripple or destroy France. It was in this view, that he refused to fulfil the treaty of '83 by evacuating the Western Posts and kept the Indians in a state of excitement. He therefore deferred the making of this offered commercial treaty, to learn if events would not enable him to do better. The territorial increase of Russia, Prussia and Austria by the division of Poland was of no advantage to Great Britain. It was unexpected. It was a bitter pill, but being in the conspiracy it was swallowed. The result was the triumph of the French Republic as shown by M. de la Riviére. This was the state of affairs in Europe when Genet returned from Russia in 1792. The Girondists had some hope that the British people would see the madness of Pitt's political course, restore Mr. Fox to power, not object to a new treaty of commerce between France and the U. S. which would relieve the States from their old and disagreeable obligations, establish them in a position of fair and honest neutrality, to which Great Britain would herself accede and thus restore peace to the world. At Harper's Ferry the French had arrived first and thus defeated a reconciliation with England. In 1793, the British agents and the French Emigrés had arrived first; and Genet found the President entrenched behind a solid wall of preconceived hostility and impenetrable Court etiquette that rendered him inaccessible. Even the doors of the Philadelphia Court Society wère sealed up. None of its members called upon this man who had preferred patriotism to personal advantage.

American historical writers claim that the Letters of Marque issued from American ports, were a violation of the Neutrality Proclamation and therefore a crime. The letters of Marque were sent to Genet

by his Government to distribute to the Consuls. Before doing so he inquired from the Governor of South Carolina, if there were any laws against Americans taking service with another country and was informed there were none. These simple and honest Republicans, had no idea that the American President was more imperial than a British King. The Proclamation of Neutrality had not yet been issued; but even if it had I will allow Lord Russell, Chief Justice of England, to answer this by an extract from his speech to the New York Bar Association at Saratoga, in August, 1896. "No sooner had Washington, as President, "and Jefferson, as Secretary of State, promulgated "the rules of Neutrality, by which they intended "to be guided, than they caused the arrest of "Gideon Henfield, an American citizen, to be tried "for taking service on board a French Privateer, "as being a *criminal act, because in contravention* "*of these rules. Political* feeling procured an acquittal in spite of the Judge's direction. Later on, Congress passed the act of 1794, making such "conduct criminal; not as I gather because it was "admitted to be necessary, but simply to strengthen "the hands of the Executive. I can hardly doubt "how the same case would have been dealt with in "England. Assuming the doing of the acts for-"bidden by Proclamation of Neutrality, although "infraction of international law, not to be misde-"meanors at common law, and not to have been "offenses by municipal statute, the Judges, I can-"not doubt, would have said, the act was yester-"day legal or at least not illegal, and the muni-"cipal law not having declared it a crime, they "would not so declare it. *According to the law of* "*England a Proclamation by the Executive in* "*however solemn form has no legislative force un-*"*less an Act of Parliament has so enacted.*"

The other alleged *crime*, a threat to appeal to

the people was founded on the charge that a vessel called the Little Sarah taken prize by the L'Embuscade and brought into Philadelphia had been renamed "Le Petit Democrat," and was fast becoming a Privateer. Governor Mifflin sent his private Secretary, Dallas, to Genet, at midnight to request him to detain her in port. Governor Mifflin, in compliance with an order of Government, had ordered a regiment of militia to detain her by force, and if necessary to sink her, and they were about to erect batteries on Mud Island for that purpose. Genet declaimed against the treatment he had received in strong language; declined to promise to detain the vessel, and advised that she should not be fired on, as the fire would probably be returned. The next day Mr. Jefferson, his pretended friend, went in person to see him, when he also refused to make any promise, only observing, that the vessel would probably not sail for two or three days. See Jefferson's account of what was said in Spark's life of Washington. The troops were withdrawn, the vessel fell down the river the next day, as Genet had said she would, and afterwards went to sea. Thus was happily defeated a miserable attempt to involve the United States in war with France. The result would have been the forcing of the States back to Great Britain. Jefferson does not pretend that Genet made any threat to appeal to the people to him, and when it was claimed to have been made to Mr. Dallas at his midnight call, Dallas made an affidavit that no such threat was made to him, and read it at a public meeting in Philadelphia. Still it was reported to Washington on his return to Philadelphia and made him furious.

This is an extract of a letter written by Genet and addressed to Jefferson in 1797, but not published for politicial reasons. "And when the

President returned from Mount Vernon, called back by the clamors of the English faction and of the Minister to whom he had delegated the executive power during his absence, I imparted to you the resolution I had formed to open my heart to him with frankness, and try to put an end to disputes that were every day becoming more serious. You represented to me that this procedure would be contrary to established usage; that all communication of Foreign Ambassadors with the Executive should pass through the Secretary of State, and that probably I would not be admitted. But resolved to attempt everything that might conciliate matters, I went the same evening to the President's house; I found him with Mrs. Washington and Senator Morris. After some very polite and obliging discourse on the part of Mrs. Washington, I arose, and approaching the chair of the President, said to him, that I desired to have a private interview with him. He at first made me the answer that you foresaw; but insisting and assuring him that it was of the highest importance for the maintenance of good understanding between our two countries; that we were perhaps both of us deceived and that it was necessary to understand one another, he passed with me into the next room. After being seated, I spoke to him as a man who sincerely meant well. I protested to him, that I had received and not given the impulse which served to disturb the government, and that I did not believe it to be anything more than the simultaneous effect of the honesty and up-rightness of the people. I protested what is entirely true that I had been entirely amazed on reading in the public journals, certain articles which they attributed to me relative to his conduct towards France; but in which I had no participation; that my correspondence was indeed animated, but if he would condescend to put

himself in my position, and consider that by his Proclamation of Neutrality, and the interpretation that had been given to it, he had annulled the most sacred treaties, deprived the French people, at a moment when they were in the greatest need of it for the defence of their colonies, of the alliance which they considered as property dearly bought, he would acknowledge that unless I was a traitor I could not act otherwise. But that just as much as I had shown myself punctillious and inexorable on the strict execution of our old treaties, I would show myself quite as generous being well informed of the magnanimity of France, if he would trample under the feet of liberty, the old treaties, and form a new pact, which would only contain principles of eternal truth, and a basis founded in the nature of things; after which, having never despaired of the French people, I added with confidence, that the Republic would disembarrass itself with glory, from all her difficulties; that her armies repulsed at some points by the infamous manoeuvres of the hypocrites to whom the inexperience of the government had confided it, would soon under the orders of Commanders truly Republican, repair all its losses, multiply its victories, and force Europe to sue for peace on conditions that France herself should see proper to dictate, when she would not forget the United States. The President listened to all I had said and simply told me that he did not read the papers, and that he did not care what they said concerning his administration. We left the room, he accompanied me as far as the staircase, took me by the hand and pressed it. This silent response filled me with flattering thoughts. I hastened to your office the next morning; you blushed on hearing that I had had a private interview, and you were expressing your astonishment at it, when the door was opened.

It was the President himself. I arose looked at you alternately to see if I could read in your looks an invitation to remain, for which I would have voluntarily given a part of my life, but a very imperative sign on your part obliged me to withdraw. I saw you afterwards and used every proper means to know whether the President had spoken to you respecting the step I had taken, but you maintained an imperturbable silence."

"A short time afterwerds, the squadron of the Republic, proscribed and flying from the calamities of St. Domingo, came, of their own accord, to the United States to put themselves under my direction. I formed the design of making them serviceable to the cause of liberty in the new world and informed you of it. I fixed upon New York as one of the most convenient and best supplied ports in the Union as the place of its rendezvous and reorganization. I embraced that opportunity of getting rid of all the Privateers, by attaching them as advice boats and tenders to the service of the squadron. I took leave of you and the President, who received me very politely, took wine with me, and a number of officers whom I presented to him, and came to New York, where the republicans of that city gave me a very honorable reception, and very useful in the circumstances in which I found myself placed face to face with a squadron in insurrection.

I learned a few minutes after my arrival that the emissaries of the government had neglected nothing to prevent that reception, by publishing that I had insulted the President, and that I had threatened to appeal from his decisions to the people. This was the first intelligence I had ever had of that fiction, certified to by Messrs. Jay and King. I laughed at it and thought it needed no answer. Some true friends who had not put themselves forward as many had done, and whose at-

tachment to me increased in proportion to my misfortunes, thought differently upon the subject. I reflected more upon it and perceived that such an imposture must have been fabricated with some deep design. I recollected a conversation that Mr. Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury, had with me, in which after having told me that the United States would commit "an act of hostility" if they were to pay the whole of the debt due to France, endeavored to prove that the *cassus foederis* did not exist between France and the United States; and that the latter would give us no manner of assistance, because we had acted in a hostile manner to Great Britain, by our irruption into the low countries, by our projects upon Holland, by our correspondence with the popular societies of England; by the connections of M. Chauvelin and of his mentor, with the opposition party; and of *the appeal to the people with which they threatened the cabinet of his Britainic Majesty in the National Convention.* I compared these observations which at least had the merit of candor, with what was going on with respect to myself, and suspecting that they were seeking for pretexts either to strengthen the arguments of Mr. Pitt, by corroborating them with the testimony of the Unietd States or to give color to the ingratitude of the Federal Government to discard our alliance and to cement one with England, I wrote directly to the President, to know if it was true that I had threatened to appeal from his decisions to the people. You answered me in his name in an evasive manner. Not being able through this channel to obtain satisfaction, I addressed myself to the Attorney General of the United States the famous Randolph. He made a dilatory reply and dragged the matter along, until the arrival of my successor, who. in compliance with his orders enjoined me from pursuing the matter fur-

ther, and from continuing the proceedings I had taken in the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

My successor, Fauchet, was rendered impotent, by the organization which had been given to his mission, by disguised royalists, who served by their talents the stupid ambition, the political ferocity of Robespierre, to re-establish despotism upon the sullied and disgusting ruins of liberty, after they should have accomplished the ruin of that wicked man. He was obliged, therefore, to throw himself into the arms of the enemies of his country, to disavow all I had done and to demand my arrest before he had seen me, so that I might be executed on board the fleet at Brest. Robespierre on your sole denunciation, having given the order not to let me arrive alive at Paris; although he had not read my reports nor awaited my defence as citizen Adet has since officially informed me. This sanguinary requisition was rejected by Washington, who declared that he had demanded my recall and not my punishment. But Randolph, your friend, the man of precious confessions, added in confidence that I had still many friends. That it was necessary to wait, but that if France insisted, they would examine if the power of the President, which on this point was questionable, might not still afford some expedient to do what France desired.

All these infamies have fully justified in the tribunal of my conscience the course I have taken, not being recalled, to remain in America after rendering my accounts and placing my papers in the hands of my successor in an honorable manner; and although with little fortune, to bury myself in retirement and silence; to meditate upon the great revolutions of the world; to try to penetrate the secrets of nature, and above all, to isolate myself from the detestable intrigues of courts and the discouraging cabals of the people."

"I would to God, sir, that doing more justice to your talents you had likewise consecrated to the cultivation of the sciences the balance of your life, after having labored in establishing the independence of the United States. I wish that all the other envoys of the Federal Government had done the same. France would then perhaps have passed without any suspended motion from one energetic government to another. The blood of the Bourbons, banished like that of the Tarquins, would not have flowed upon the scaffold. The French people, powerful and formidable, would have restrained Europe and found allies; millions of men would still be living for agriculture and the arts; Poland would not be destroyed, and the United States having conducted themselves strictly as an association of industrious merchants and peaceable farmers, who prefer the horn of plenty to the trumpet of fame, would not have drawn upon themselves the resentment of all parties who have succeeded each other in France, and who have been all equally deceived—of Spain, which the late retrocession to Great Britain of a favor granted to the United States must have singularly alarmed; also of some of the neutral northern powers. who neither, like your commentaries on Vattel, nor the refusal made in line with those principles to the Court of Denmark, to co-operate to maintain the principles of the armed neutrality, that solid basis of the freedom of the seas laid down at St. Petersburg, through the intervention of France and Spain. Finally, of that man whose name to-day represents the collective idea of all perfidy, I mean Pitt, who discontented, as is always the case, with tergiversation and half measures, seems to have approximated himself to the United States only to spit upon them his last venom, to punish them for having first raised the standard of liberty which crushed him, to set them on fire, tear them to pieces and make their blind-

ness serve for the destruction of the treaties which guarantee their independence."

During the early years of the American Revolution before the King of France had openly espoused its cause, Paul Jones in the Bonhomme Richard, as a Privateer, made excursions from ports in France to prey upon British commerce in the Baltic. This commerce was mostly with Russia, over which the British merchants had obtained such a monoply and control by treaty and long habit, that it was only after many years and with great difficulty, that Catharine was brought to see the advantage that would arise to her Empire, by opening its commerce to other nations. Jones was so active in the Baltic that the Russian merchants complained very seriously of his interruption of their business. The Empress became indignant, and at the request of the British Minister she ordered eight Regiments to embark for America to aid in the suppression of the rebellion. Hearing of it, the French Minister went to her Vice Chancellor, Count Panin, a firm friend of France, to inquire as to the truth of the rumor. Yes, said Count Panin, it is true, but leave me, I am thinking how I can counteract that intrigue. The result was that the order was countermanded and the Empress announced that she would make a Code of Laws for the protection of neutral commerce upon the high seas, to be enforced by arms. This was accomplished, and the Code was acceded to by France, Spain, Holland, Denmark and the American Congress. The British Government claiming an Empire of the seas refused to accede to it or to acknowledge its principles. This accession was one of the pledges and promises that the United States made as a consideration for its independence.

Genet had been directed by his Government to consult Mr. Jefferson upon all of his acts in

America. He did so. He took no step without consulting that secret friend to a British Alliance, while at the same time he pretended to be a friend to the obligations of the treaties with France. These positions were antagonistic; the alternative was the new treaty that Genet was authorized to make, in which France would give up the old obligations and make a new treaty that would place the American Gov't. in a position of actual neutrality, to which it was believed Great Britain would accede, if not by Mr. Pitt then by Mr. Fox, who would be able to defeat Mr. Pitt and his party If Mr. Jefferson had been a sincere friend of France it would have succeeded; but he was not; he too was in favor of the English alliance. When, upon the occasion of his desire to have a personal interview with the President, which Mr. Jefferson tried to dissuade him from, and what transpired the next day, Genet became fully convinced of this duplicity, and the breach occurred. Mr. Jefferson called some of his Republican friends together and told them he could not retain his place in the Cabinet unless he gave up Genet; that he must give up one or the other, and it was wise to give up Genet, which was agreed to. On the other hand, Genet finding himself betrayed by his pretended friend, with no support in the Cabinet, with his own counrty in the hands of a mob, the guillotine behind him, and a hostile but deceived government before him; fully convinced from his thorough knowledge, of the secret intention of Mr. Pitt to regain the thirteen Colonies, felt the necessity of popular organization. It seems never to have suggested itself to the mind of any American historian that one of the objects of the military organization in the south and northeast, with the considerable French Naval power on the coasts and the organization of the people by means of Clubs might, have been to aid the United States in

defending itself, should Pitt, still holding the wertern posts, still arming the Indians, still refusing to fulfil the treaty of peace of 1783, still postponing to make the commerical treaty which Washington so much desired, still watching for the utter extermination of France, determine, that the affairs of the Continent were in a condition that enabled him to demand and enforce the immediate return of the thirteen colonies to their former condition of allegiance.

It was partly in this, as well as in the interest of liberty in general, that finding the American Government in a state of apathy and unconsciousness, Genet called around him some of the more advanced Republicans and pointed out to them the advantages of organization by means of Clubs and Societies.

The history of Philadelphia by Messrs. Scharf & Westcott, Vol. 1, p. 474, says of this period: "The Fourth of July this year, 1794, was cele-"brated more as a French than an American holi-"day. On that day the first Democratic Society "established in the United States was organized "with David Rittenhouse as President, William "Coates and Charles Biddle as Vice Presidents, J. "Porter and Peter A. Duponceau, Secretaries, "Israel Israel, Treasurer, Dr. James Hutchinson, "Alexander J. Dallas, Michael Liebe, Jonathan "Dickinson Sargeant and David Jackson, Commit-"tee of Correspondence." Again at page 475: "It "was about this time that the name Democrat de-"rived from the Democratic Society which had "been formed in Philadelphia in imitation of the "political clubs of Paris, was first introduced as a "party appellation into American politics. A long "time elapsed, however, before it was accepted by "any but the more *ultra portion* of the opposition. "*It was never recognized by Jefferson*, and even of "these societies, several preferred to call them-

"selves Republican. It was only in combination "with that earlier name that the term Democrat "came into general use, the combined opposition "taking to themselves the title of Democratic Re-"publicans." When the first Club referred to was formed in Philadelphia in 1793 a Committee waited on Genet to consult with him upon the name they should adopt. They proposed to call themselves the Sons of Liberty. He says in a memorandum of the occurrence: "They proposed to call them-"selves the Sons of Liberty; I opposed it and sug-"gested the name Democratic Club and it was "adopted." A century has passed since these events, and Democracy has triumphed. Within a decade the Federalists went down before it never to recover. The Whig party which followed went down later; and now there is nothing left but the Democratic Republican party divided into two parties, one taking the name of Republican and the other Democrat. Each has a Club called by the name of its party in every town and ward throughout the whole United States. "Democracy "will never go down again; it has come to stay; it is "spreading over the world, springing up like some "of the most beautiful flowers, from the use of fer-"tilizers, that in themselves, are not always "pleasant to delicate nostrils.

"Democracy is fallible" says Senator Lodge in Scribner's magazine for December, 1898, "and im-"perfect, because human nature is so; but it has "come; it has brought untold good to mankind; it "will bring yet more; no man can stay its resistless "march.

Speaking of the war of 1812, this same distinguished writer says: "English brutality surpassed "even the cynical outrages heaped upon us by "Napoleon and brought at last the war of 1812. A "righteous war of resistance and one bringing most "valuble results to the United States. * *

"Even Jefferson as we now know with all his reputed and apparent hostility to England, tried to "bring about close relations between the two countries, but England pursued a steady course of "hostility" p. 734.

When Genet determined at the Court of Russia to refuse the flattering offers of the Bourbon Princes, to join their conspiracy to overturn the Constitution, that he had so recently by order of the King sworn to support; he was at once denounced as a Republican and incurred the undying and everlasting hate of all the aristocrats of the world, particularly those of France and the United States. Forced to retire from the Court of Catharine, he was neither ordered by his government nor required for a long time to leave the Russian Empire. The astute Catherine allowed him to remain within call as a check upon the allies should they in any way oppose her secret intentions of aggrandizement in the direction of Poland. Exiled from the Court he found previously unknown friends, and was well informed of every step that was being taken, even to some of the most private expressions and views of the Empress, of all which, he kept his government well informed by cipher dispatches, which it did not want and finally did not even open. He was also able to reach the ear of the Empress herself, by writing an occasional dispatch in plain writing which he deposited in the ordinary post: for no letter ever went through the Russian Post Office to a foreign government that was not opened and read by the Empress herself. In this way he was able to ameliorate the condition of the French who were found in many parts of Russia. and were not always discreet in the expression of their political opinions. He repeated the hardships they endured and was sure the Empress who was of a generous nature and a kind heart, would ameliorate their condition

if she knew it. At the same time he advised the French residents to forbear the expression of their political views.

Living thus, retired from the Court, he was able to economize his expenditures; which he at once donated to his government, to aid its military and naval operations. He even exchanged his diamond watch for one less costly and donated the difference. Thus it was that when he was ordered finally to leave her domain by Catharine and to return to Paris by his own government and had reached Warsaw in August, 1892, one of the journals of that city said of him: "the Democrat Genet after "a residence of five years at the Court of St. Peters- "burg, arrived here last evening. If his govern- "ment had listened to him, the allies would not "now be upon the banks of the Rhine."

One thing is certain, that is that the United States never had a more sincere friend to its interests and independence than this young ambassador. His father had done much to aid the Americans in their revolution. What was the labor of a General in the field in comparison with the mental strain of the diplomacy that kept England isolated on the Continent of Europe so that she could only obtain a few Hessians to help her to subdue the American rebels? What was the labor of young Layfayette to that of the Minister De Vergennes! In 1793, Washington's Cabinet was unanimous, including Mr. Jefferson, for a treaty of amity and alliance and of Commerce with Great Britain. No one knew better than Genet who was intimately acquainted with the secret views of all the cabinets of Europe, as well as their interests and power, that Mr. Pitt had no present intention of accepting it or giving up his passion to reconquer the American Colonies. No one knew better than he, that France did not want to involve the United States in a war with England; and no one knew better than he, that Mr.

Pitt was neither anxious nor willing to go into a war with the United States, so long as matters were kept so active on the continent and France was not destroyed. France claimed the right to issue the letters of Marque and enlist men who chose to take service with her, as Paul Jones had done prior to the French alliance, during the American Revolution.

In August, 1793, Genet found himself in a very uncomfortable diplomatic position. The King and Queen had been beheaded by the Jacobins, so had the Girondists who sent him. France had gone into the control of Robespierre and the Reign of Terror. He accomplished something, however; he had forced the acknowledgement of the French Republic. Mr. Hamilton had refused to advance any part of the debt due to France by the United States, but Genet had forced him to do so, by declaring that he would assign it in portions to those American merchants who would furnish him with flour and provisions to send to the starving inhabitants of the French West India Islands. Mr. Hamilton thereupon did advance him some millions of dollars which he expended in the purchase of those commodities. These purchases were put on American vessels sailing under its neutral flag, to be transported to the French Islands. They had no sooner left the harbors than they were seized by the British cruisers and men of war, who took the cargo to England as contraband of war and impressed the sailors into their service as subjects of the King. It was in vain that Genet protested to the American government; his demands that it should protect the honor of its neutral flag were considered offensive.

In August he came to New York where he was received with the greatest honor. It was deemed important by the government and its partisans that something should be done to

counteract the growing popularity of the French cause. Immediately Messrs. Jay & King published a card stating that Genet had insulted the President and threatened to appeal to the people. Genet at once denied it and wrote to the President to ask if he had ever insulted him. This was not answered. He then applied to the Attorney General to prosecute those gentlemen for their libel against the representative of a foreign government. The law of nations makes a foreign ambassador the guest of the nation and obliges it to protect and defend him from all aggressions. This received no notice. He then advised with Mr. Edward Livingston, a prominent lawyer in New York, by whose advice he brought suit against Messrs. Jay & King in the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania for libel. The suit was intended to prove that the story was a calumny and to discover its origin or author. Messrs Jay & King declared in their notice that they had good authority for what they certified. There can be little doubt that their authority was Mr. Jefferson himself since it was attributed to Mr. Dallas who was sent to Genet at midnight in regard to "Le Petit Democrat". Mr. Dallas not only denied that such threat had been made to him, but swore to his denial in an affidavit that he read at a public meeting in Philadelphia.

In November, 1793, the British Government issued orders that were intended to clean the ocean of American shipping. In December Congress met and Genet left the generous, patriotic, sincere friends he had made in New York, and his much loved Cornelia Clinton and went to Philadelphia.

Things had changed. it was known now that the American Government had been deceived by the ingenuity of the British Minister, and its own credulity. and that Mr. Pitt had no present intention of making any treaty of amity and alliance or even of commerce with the American Government.

Mr. Jefferson had retained his place in Washington's Cabinet, and retained his friends in the offices, but he had no intention of losing the ultra republicans, the men of the Democratic societies. Thereupon his Republican friends held another caucus and determined that it was then possible to make up the difference between Washington and Genet and to that end appointed a committee consisting of Messrs. Gallatin, Bayard and Taylor, United States Senators, to endeavor to reconcile the difference between the President and the Ambassador. They waited upon Genet to inform him of their good intentions, but he declined, in view of the fact that he had received no further instructions, and it was known that a new Ambassador with new instructions was already on the ocean and would soon arrive.

Fauchet, the successor, arrived soon after in January. His instructions were to disavow all that Genet had done and to pursue a course entirely the reverse of his. Genet was not recalled but was superseded and the first act of Fauchet was to demand his surrender for the guillotine. This was refused by the American Government with an intimation that it might be done later on. Fauchet then informed him that the suits he had instituted in Pennsylvania against Messrs. Jay & King, two high officials, were offensive to the American Government, and it was the wish of the men in charge of the guillotine called the French Government, that they should be discontinued. This he refused, giving as a reason that this libel affected himself personally. Fauchet reminded him that he had a mother and sisters in France and by the law of that country, the family of a Foreign Minister were liable with their lives for his conduct. There could be no answer to this. The suits were discontinued. and this political lie was sent down through the ages, as a part of American

history; taught to the rising generations in the schools and hugged to their bosom by American historians as an item of the insolence of detested France and the greatness of America.

Genet settled his accounts with his successor for the millions he had received and expended for subsistence for the starving inhabitants of the French West Indies, that went mostly however to feed the British, omitting to take the commission to which custom entitled him. He had spent a good part of his outfit in erecting hospitals and feeding the Refugees from St. Domingo. This was never refunded him by his own government, nor did it ever pay him the balance of his salary, but it did confiscate the small property he left in France. The sale of his horses and carriages and furniture in Philadelphia brought him enough to buy a small farm at Jamaica near New York, where he was kindly and generously received by the people. The Federalists to defeat his marriage with Miss Clinton spread a report that he already had a wife in France. Until this calumny was removed Governor Clinton withheld his consent, and it was not until November 1794 that the marriage took place in the Government house on the Bowling Green in the City of New York, and he took his bride to the Long Island farm. After the fall of Robespierre in 1794 he had good reason to believe that he would be recalled by the French Directory. This was defeated by Mr. Monroe in the interest of the American government which was misleading France, while Mr. Pitt, having finally given up his dearest wish to reconquer the colonies in view of the failure to crush France, was ready to make the commercial treaty. Mr. Jay was suddenly taken from the Bench of the Supreme Court of the United States and sent to England to complete it. The French government was astonished. Mr. Monroe complained that he had himself been grossly de-

ceived by his own government. When Mr. Jay returned with the treaty it was freely denounced and burned in the streets of New York and Philadelphia. Three years after, Mr. Giles in Congress speaking of the Jay treaty said, "For the making "of such a treaty I have never heard a reason. It "has been called an instrument of peace and its "first effect, was that we were summoned to fight "with France, Spain and Holland. One of the articles was that free ships do not make free goods. "This was highly injurious to both France and the "United States. The United States Government acted under the idea of a dangerous French influence "in this country. Even the pulpit reviled Genet. "If execration, disappointment and contempt could "fill the measure of his punishment he had it." The execration and contempt of the political pulpit falls with as much effect upon right minded people as hail stones fall upon a slated roof. The people were with him always. As the son-in-law of Governor Clinton, whom the people elected and reelected Governor of this great State for twenty-two years and afterwards twice as Vice-President of the United States, he had all the position and influence that he might require. The troubles in Europe brought in time exiles from France, Ireland and the whole of Europe. They mostly came to New York and brought great accessions to the Democratic Republican party, so much so that about 1800 Mr. John Adams and the Federalists passed the alien and sedition laws in Congress for the purpose, it was believed, to drive Genet and these others out of the country. Mr. John Adams, at a dinner party at the house of Mr. Payne in New York, denied this, and said Genet was the last man to whom he would have applied it; he would never forget the service of his father to the American cause in France. In after years Napoleon invited Genet

to return. He had his name struck from the list of the proscribed and directed his sister to write to him that he would be well received. There were but four of the diplomats who had voluntarily remained away from their country during the French revolution, whom Napoleon allowed to return: one was Talleyrand, another was Maret, Duke of Bassano, another, whose name I have not at hand, and Genet. This last was about to accept and went to engage passage on a vessel when he met Count Real, from whom he inquired what shape the Government in France would assume. Real told him Napoleon would certainly be made Emperor. Thereupon he changed his determination, removed to a farm at Greenbush on the Hudson opposite Albany, the Capitol of the State, to be nearer the Governor, and became an American citizen. He made his declaration in the Supreme Court at Albany and was accompanied by DeWitt Clinton and Lieutenant Governor Broome as his witnesses. Mr. Hamilton was present and addressed the Court, saying, it was a notable event and a compliment to our institutions, from which it would seem that Mr. Hamilton was not affected by the revilement and contempt of his political friends.

When Congress had assembled in December, 1793, and Mr. Jefferson and his political friends appointed a committee of three to wait upon Genet in an effort to procure a reconciliation with President Washington, it was entirely within the probabilities not only, that it would have been accomplished but that a new treaty could have been agreed upon and the mission been entirely successful and a world of misery and disgrace saved to America and Great Britain also, as well as the war of 1812. For by that time Washington must have known that the British Government had been misleading and deceiving him. Whoever has

carefully noted the character of Washington must have seen that he was apt to start wrong, yet was afterwards quite open to reason and conviction; but the infamous communication to the Jacobin government of France had gone out and had been at once answered with a warrant for the guillotine. The new ambassador had arrived, with instructions directly the reverse of those given by the Girondists. The poisoned seed had borne poisoned fruit. It is true that history repeats itself; a century has passed, the curious American passion for an offensive and defensive alliance with Great Britain has had its run and is now revived by the political pulpit of America with as much intensity as ever, to unite to conquer the world. Fortunately Great Britain has a sensible woman as its Queen and one sensible minister. "On the 12th of December, "1798, at Paris, Sir Edmond J. Monson took "occasion to express his great sympathy for "France and his profound conviction that she "would unite herself with England and the United "States for progress and civilization." "I hope," he said, "that at Christmas time there will no "longer be any question of war between Great "Britain and France."

In January following, things had progressed so far in that direction, that this cloud of a useless war had disappeared, and "the programme so far amounts to an Anglo-French treaty of the highest order." Such an union of good feeling between the two greatest civilized nations in the world might have been brought about a century ago, and untold miseries, wars and bloodshed avoided, but for Washington's suspicions of the intentions of France, and the American Anglo-Saxon "craze." In the fall of 1793 it was learned in the United States that on the 6th of November preceding, the order in Council had been made, directing British cruisers to stop, detain and bring into port all

ships laden with goods, the produce of any French Colony or carrying provisions or other supplies for the use of such colony. Simultaneously with the adoption of this order an expedition was dispatched for the conquest of the French West Indies. Great excitement was caused in Philadelphia by the news of this action on the part of the British government and on the 26th of March, 1794 Congress passed a resolution laying an "embargo "for thirty days on American vessels bound to any "foreign port or place. * * On the 13th of April, "1794, a large body of sailors, paraded the streets "of Philadelphia; apprehensions of a riot were felt "but Governor Mifflin forced them to disperse. "The militia were called out, however, and meas-"ures taken for the defense of the city." Scarffs Philadelphia, Vol. 1, p. 477. But Genet had ceased to represent France at that time and his successor was not authorized to enter into any new treaty negotiation.

Some years later on, Mde: Campan entrusted to the care of Mr. Monroe, American Minister to France, on his return to America, a set of Sevres porcelain that belonged to her brother. Not hearing from it for a long time, Genet wrote to him congratulating him upon his election as Governor of Virginia, and enquired about the porcelain. "Perhaps" he says "you will learn also with some interest that the "Directory of the French Repub-"lic has recalled me as I should have been in 1794 "in the most honorable manner." On the 30th of July, 1800, Mr. Monroe answered this letter and in it says: "The box of porcelain which was entrusted "to us, by our most estimable friend Madame Cam-"pan, was carried with our baggage to Albemarle, "where it has since remained unpacked. I should "have forwarded it to you long since, but declined "it, lest in the then infatuated state of the public "mind, it might be considered as a proof of a con-

"spiracy against the Government, and of a trea-"sonable correspondence with France, &c. I shall, "however, hasten to have it brought here and for-"warded to you in the care of some friend in New "York, of which you shall be advised. I am "happy to hear your Government has recalled "you, to its own and the bosom of your friends. "As a friend to free government, your name will "be recorded in the history of the present day, "and your patient submission to the censures you "incurred in the station of a frugal and industrious "farmer, will be a proof of the uprightness of your "heart and integrity of your conduct, while a vic-"tim to pure principles. I considered it my duty "not to injure your fame or detract from your "merit while I was in France; but to anticipate "and prevent as far as I could any ill effects which "your collision with our Government might pro-"duce in the French councils. It was natural had "you returned that you should have gone into a "detail with your government, of the incidents "attending your mission; and more than probable "that the communications you would have made "to it would have increased the jealousy which it "then entertained of the views of ours. It was my "desire and endeavor, to dissipate completely all "those jealousies, and to bring the French govern-"ment into a system of conduct towards us, "through the whole of the war, great and magnani-"mous, which would have done it honor to the "latest posterity. I had, no particular reason to "conclude you would not have united in such a "plan, other than the strength of human passions "and the knowledge I had, that you thought you "were injured. Hence I was persuaded your re-"turn at the time might be injurious, and was *in* "*fact averse to it.* But I did not oppose it by any "direct or indirect agency. But such was the "state of things growing out of my standing with

"the principal members of the government, that "they would take no step in it without speaking "to me on it. When the subject was opened I al- "ways was silent; testifying in favor of your in- "tegrity only; and whence it was inferred, and "truly, I was averse to your return at the time. "The whole of this has passed, and is only recol- "lected as interesting to ourselves. I too have had "my day of suffering. I served with zeal the "cause of liberty and my country, and was re- "quited, by every act of injustice which could be "rendered me short of imprisonment and death. "This too has passed though it can never be recol- "lected by me but with disgust "

The period referred to by Mr. Monroe was in 1794, after the fall of Robespierre. At this period the hopes of Pitt to crush France had vanished, and he was ready to make the American treaty of commerce. Mr. Jay was taken from the bench of the Supreme Court, and sent with all speed to London to complete it. Mr. Monroe at Paris was kept in profound ignor ance of the intentions of the American Government and successfully but unintentionally deceived that of France. When the treaty was made it was a great surprise to France to learn that young America had already learned the ways of "perfidious Albion." On the 20 Brumaire, year 2 of the Republic, Mangourit, who had been vice consul at Charleston, wrote Genet, "Leave! Genet, leave! Justice is waiting for you! Tyranny exists no more! Time is an honest man you say and so he is. He presents his wing to you, your friends sigh for you. If you do not come, what negligence! My friend, honor! Pascal embraces you. I was named to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the thirteenth of this month. With your talents I should have accepted. Come my dear Genet, come and merit your civic crown."

In 1800 at the desire of his father in law, Genet

removed to a farm on the Hudson four miles from Albany, where he continued to reside until 1834, when he died, and was buried in the church cemetery at East Greenbush. Having become a citizen he devoted a good part of his time to becoming valuable as such to his adopted country. He was always active and influential in the Democratic party, was admitted to its secret councils, and always was active at the party organization of his town. He was fully versed in the workings of Democracy. He often urged DeWitt Clinton to lend his great talents and influence to the construction of the Erie Canal, by representing to him what the Empress Catharine had done for Russia by means of canals. Mr. Clinton finally did adopt and accomplish that great work, which made the State of New York the Empire State and the City of New York the largest and richest city in America. Later on he spent many years in writing and making addresses to the Legislature, to induce it to abolish imprisonment for debt, and finally in 1828 with the aid of a young member of assembly from the City of New York, Silas M. Stillwell, they procured the passage of the first non-imprisonment act known as the Stillwell act. It drew the line between honest and dishonest debtors. The next year some of the merchants in Albany petitioned the Legislature to repeal the act, claiming that they could not well do business unless they could imprison their debtors. The Legislature remained firm and non imprisonment for honest debtors, has become the law throughout the whole United States. "We know, says Senator "Lodge, in the article above referred to, how dem-"ocracy has reformed the awful criminal code of "England of Pitt and Fox, and the miseries of the "debtors' prison, which Dickens described thirty "years ago; but we overlook the fact, that we our-"selves were but little better in these respects.

"Robert Morris the patriot who upheld the break-"ing credit and failing treasury of the confedera-"tion in the days of the Revolution, and gave to "the American cause freely from his own purse "passed, four years in a debtors' jail in his old age "for the crime of having failed in business. Such "a punishment inflicted by the law for such a "cause would be impossible now, and yet, this is "but an illustration of the vast changes effected "by democracy in the relations of men one to an-"other. The altruism which is so marked a feature "of the century just closing, is the outcome of "Democracy. Democracy, is fallible and imperfect "because human nature is so; but it has come, it "has brought untold good to mankind, it will "bring yet more. No man can stay its resistless "march."

The first act of the French Revolutionists in 1789 was to abolish slavery in all the French possessions and to open the doors of the debtor's' prisons.

Genet also gave a part of his time to scientific subjects; he made numerous experiments on the upward force of fluids and wrote and published a small work upon the subject which drew upon him a renewal of the old sneers and insults. In the course of these experiments he contrived a life boat. It was a flat bottomed boat, about fifteen feet long, pointed in front, swelling at the sides, and square in the stern, with a seat running all around. Under this seat was a continuous tin pipe like a stove pipe about ten inches in diameter hermetically sealed. I remember to have heard that a hole was cut in the bottom of the boat, and two men placed upon it, who floated it down the river in view of the New York public. He obtained a patent for this life boat, a model of which was filed in the Patent Office in Washington, but was destroyed when in later years the

Patent Office was destroyed by fire. I remember also a life preserver made upon the same principle. It was a belt to go around the chest, to which were attached a row of tins about the size of a half pint measure made air tight. Both of these inventions are now in world wide use, in somewhat different form but upon no different or better principle. They have done a vast amount of good in saving life upon the water.

American history says and insists that Genet after his alleged fruitless mission, retired to obscurity, wondering how Washington could be claimed to be a great man. The sarcasm is bitter but without merit. The time that he gave to thinking of Washington was not to wonder how he could have been considered a great man, but how he himself could have excited that intense detestation which caused Washington, in a letter to Arthur Lee in October, 1793, to refuse even to write his name, speaking to him as "that thing." Genet having become in later years more fully informed of American prejudices an incident recurred to him with so much force that he wrote it down.. It is this: After the insurrection of the negro slaves in St. Domingo when the French residents came flying to Philadelphia, the mulattos and negroes, who had possessed themselves of the Island, sent an Embassy to Genet, who was the nearest and highest representative of the French Government, to explain to him their loyalty to the French Republic and their present intentions. He received them as ambassadors, treated them as such and invited them to dine with him. Washington was a large slave owner, filled with the American prejudice against the blacks and probably nothing in the world could have given him such great offense. But to Genet it was different; he was a stranger to those prejudices; he had been brought up and educated

under his father's supervision in the French Office of Foreign Affairs, among the literary men, the poets and statesmen known as the French Philosophers, in furtherance of whose teachings slavery has ceased to exist and debtors' prisons have disappeared. "Can this" he writes, "have been the cause of Washington's great antipathy?"

In conclusion I cannot forbear to mention two incidents in his life that would seem to be of interest. When the French Monarchy was overthrown, and the Russian Vice-Chancellor informed Genet that the Empress would no longer receive him as the representative of France, it was announced to him, after the guests had assembled, but before they had taken their seats, at a diplomatic dinner at the palace of the Vice-Chancellor, Genet at once, in a loud voice, so that all might hear, protested, that a nation had a right to regulate its own domestic government in its own way, and withdrew without waiting for the dinner. A century has passed since then. In 1862, when Louis Napoleon proposed to intervene in the American civil war, the Emperor of Russia is reported to have directed his minister to answer in this way: "Say to the Emperor, that the United "States have as much right to establish their form "of government, as we have to establish our form. "Tell him that we have as little right to interfere "with that form once established, as they have to "interfere with our form that we have established. "And tell him further that if he meddles with "their form of government we will strike him." Thus the right declared in St. Petersburg in the presence of all Europe, and then denied, is at the end of a century declared to the world, by the Emperor of all the Russians on the very spot where it was then denied.

The other incident is this: When I was quite young I remember one hot Sunday in August, 1831,

three young Frenchmen came climbing up the high hill at Green Bush on which the house stands, with their coats upon their arms, sweltering with the heat, and enquired for M. Genet. One was young de Tocqueville, another was his friend Beaumont and the name of the third I do not remember. They had come to obtain information from the former French Diplomat and present American Democrat, to aid de Tocqueville to write a book on Democracy in America; and to whom could they have come, who could give them better information. He could not only give them the information but he could give it to them in French, which must have been of great importance since de Tocqueville did not speak much, if any, English. They remained to dinner and conversed until near sunset, when they were sent back in my father's carriage, a barouche in which Lafayette had paraded the streets of New York. When in recent years the diary of de Tocqueville was published, I went to the Astor Library to learn what he said of that Sunday in August, and all I found was "Saturday arrived in Albany, Monday left Albany." That Sunday was blank. This searcher for material to make a book in a country with whose language he was not conversant was possibly led to believe that he had better omit to mention the name of a man who was regarded with disfavor by the American people. Calumny did its work; he might use the information he got; he might mention the names of all the distinguished Americans he interviewed, but he must omit to mention Genet. De Tocqueville was an aristocrat; he threw himself into the hands of all the old Federalists he could find, and with the material thus obtained he made a book written in French and translated into English. He called it "Democracy in America." It might better be called an aristocrat's view of Democracy in America. It has accomplished nothing for Demo-

cracy. Indeed it wholly failed to convert the author himself, who afterwards accepted the title of "Baron de Tocqueville."

If you wish to destroy a man, says Mr. Crawford, in one of his novels, take away his money and pursue him with calumny. Genet lived an honored and respected citizen of the United States and when he died the State paper of New York State clothed its columns in black; the bands on the steamboats as they passed his residence played funeral dirges and long lines of carriages followed him to the tomb. In France an eulogy was pronounced upon him in the Academy of Sciences, of which he was a corresponding member, by one of its members appointed for the purpose.

New York, April, 1899.

GEO. CLINTON GENET.